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City Streets

1. Generally speaking, the main streets in the cities and towns of Orsk, Novo-Troitsk, , Novo-Orsk, Kuibyshev, Chkalov and Maksay were kept in good condition but the smaller side streets were in very poor condition. They were rutty, bumpy and narrow and it appeared that no regular provision was made for maintaining them in good condition.

Highways

2. The Orsk to Kuibyshev highway

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it appeared that the Soviets intended to keep the highway open for military traffic only.

3. From Orsk to Chkalov, the highway is a double-lane road which was always wide enough for two trucks to pass but the standard width depended upon the landscape in that it was narrower going through the mountains than it was in the valleys. The road had a hard top surface.

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4. From Chkalov to Kuibyshev, the railroad track follows a highway closely in certain parts and it was also a two-lane

SEE LAST PAGE FOR AREA CODES

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paved highway that was in very good condition. traffic on this highway was reserved for military and official traffic because very few or none of the civilian population in this area possessed automobiles. The only exception was the traffic of the POW trucks that were used to bring provisions to the camps and deliver supplies and building materials to the various areas where POW labor was being used.

5. The road was well constructed and the Orsk to Chkalov road or on any of the other main roads in this area

6. It was common knowledge among the German POWs that the Soviets kept these main highways, as well as the railroads, in good condition because they expected there was going to be another war at any time. In the winter, the main streets in the city that were used frequently by the Soviet Army were kept clean by the cities and towns responsible for the streets. In other places, snow was not removed regularly but whenever an army unit had to move, a brigade was sent ahead to clear the roads.

7. There are many mountains and valleys on the highway from Orsk to Kuibyshev but there are no tunnels.

8. The bridges on the Orsk to Kuibyshev highway are made of steel and are actually wider than the normal two lanes of the highway. They are strongly built in a stable manner so that the capacity will accommodate the heaviest military equipment.

9. The main highways are all slightly graded so that there is never any accumulation of water on them. All the main highways were in such good condition in many of them had been newly built and built well to last.

Railroads

10. The only railroad lines in the Orsk area were from Orsk to Chkalov to Kuibyshev and from Kuibyshev to Saratov. The Orsk to Kuibyshev railroad is a main line with two sets of tracks all the way through. In some places, there are three and four sets of tracks. It is over the main line that the Lightning Express from Moscow to Tashkent passes.

11. The locomotives are all steam They are large and strong locomotives that are normally used one to each train except for the heavy loads of lead in the Ural Mountains on which trains two locomotives were used. These lead trains are easily identifiable because, in addition to two locomotives, the freight cars had six axles, three in front and three on the rear of the car.

12. The railroad from Kuibyshev to Saratov is a single-line road which was also maintained in very good condition.

13. Concerning passenger travel, in addition to the Lightning Express which was a luxury train with flowers, telephone, and other such luxuries and which was used almost exclusively by high officials in the government and in the Communist Party, there were four passenger trains daily between Orsk and Chkalov. there were the same number of trains between Chkalov and Kuibyshev.

14. These four regular daily passenger trains between Orsk and Chkalov were always very badly crowded although there were 12 or 15 passenger cars carried on each

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train. They were kept clean by a cleaning woman who went through the train hourly, cleaning it out because the passengers were notoriously untidy. The fast trains, which went right through to Kuibyshev, were heated by steam but the local trains were not heated in the winter except by the passengers themselves who carried little charcoal stoves with them onto the train.

15. the trains always ran on schedule.

16. The main traffic on this railroad line was freight traffic which was probably about five to 10 times more frequent than the passenger traffic. There was a shortage of passenger cars but there was any shortage of freight cars or locomotives. In addition to the large number of freight cars that were always in transit, there were always a relatively large number of freight cars in the railroad yards at Orsk being loaded or unloaded. In addition to standard freight and the special lead freight cars, there were also armored freight cars, a type of chemical tank car and other special use cars. The special type cars, such as chemical tank cars and armored freight cars, were always under heavy guard by Soviet soldiers.

17. The only type of signals used were ordinary whistle and standard semaphore signals. The railroad ties and the road bed were always maintained in very good condition and working groups could be seen care of the road bed. On many occasions, German POWs from the camps in the Orsk area were detailed to work on the railroad road beds There were several tunnels on the railroad line between Orsk and Kuibyshev

18. The gauge of the railroad track was about one foot wider than the standard railroad gauge However, none of the freight, passenger cars or the locomotives were equipped with interchangeable axles to change for running on smaller European gauge tracks because the Soviets had replaced the European gauge tracks with wide gauge tracks throughout the USSR and as far west as Berlin. This was done in a rapid manner soon after It was a special locomotive which was equipped to pick up the narrower track and replace it at the same time with the wider gauge and by 1949, all of the railroad tracks in the Eastern Zone of Germany had been replaced by the wider Soviet gauge.

19.

20. The Orsk railroad terminal is actually located in Novo-Orsk where there were three separate loading areas. There was one railroad station in Orsk.

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21. The three loading terminals in Novo-Orsk were in an area of about one square mile. The first one was adjacent to the main railroad station on the north side of the tracks. The second loading terminal was about one half mile east and on the same side of the track. The third loading terminal was on the south side of the main tracks opposite the main station. The purpose of the three different loading terminals was to facilitate loading and unloading of freight cars.

22. The main railroad yard in Novo-Orsk had spur tracks which were sometimes single and sometimes double leading into the OCDM and other factories. The yard itself was more of a junction than a yard and in some places, it had as many as seven or eight sets of tracks, all connected by switches.

23. OCDM manufacture railroad parts. 25X1
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the OCDM manufacture freight cars but concentrate on the manufacture of railroad parts in addition to the ammunition and other products that it manufactures. However, OCDM also maintain a railroad repair facility and an area for the repair of locomotives and freight cars.

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24. it required approximately four hours to travel from Orsk to Chkalov by passenger train and about twice as long by freight train. The standard size freight train contained about 60 freight cars. In addition to regular freight trains, there were special all coal and all oil trains. Whenever the Lightning Express or the faster passenger trains came upon one of the freight trains, it was standard procedure for the freight train to go on a side track and wait until the passenger trains pass. Oftentimes, freight trains would have to wait for an hour.

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25. On both the passenger trains and particularly on the freight trains, Soviet Army guards were always carried. In addition, these trains carried the usual number of other train personnel found in Germany and the US.

26. there were sections on the railroad from Orsk to Kuibyshev where the train slowed down and on these occasions, it was usually caused by going up a grade. there are four separate places on this line where both the freight and passenger trains slowed down noticeably because of the incline.

27. The heaviest freight cars carried up to 90 tons (Russian tons). The cars themselves were not weighed but the merchandise carried was weighed before it was put in the cars and the weight was stamped on the car. On each car there was a poster attached which indicated the dimensions of the freight car, how much it weighed, net weight, the last time repairs were made on it, and the date of the last time the car was checked.

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28. 25X1
the railroad line all the way from Marshansk to Maksay had double tracks. 25X1

29. 25X1

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30. [redacted]

31. The motor vehicle transportation pool at the Maksay POW camp included six trucks, of which three were GMCs and three were Soviet ZIS trucks. There was also one US jeep in the pool. [redacted] The ZIS is a good heavy truck and there were both six cylinder and eight cylinder trucks but each of the three ZIS trucks had a different capacity, including 5, 7, and 8 1/2 tons. The GMCs were all two-ton trucks.

32. The motor pool at Maksay was a part of a large motor pool for all of the eight camps in the Orsk area and this over-all pool included about 20 trucks and several jeeps and cars. In the big pool, there were ZIS Studebaker, GMC and Bedford (UK) trucks as well as several US jeeps. The Bedford trucks were 2 1/2 ton capacity. [redacted] in Orsk a number of large Diesel trucks and trailers that [redacted] were owned by the Army and on occasion, several of these large units were temporarily assigned to the big POW transportation pool.

33. The only private automobiles [redacted] in the Orsk area were those owned or assigned to the officers of the NKVD and other military of political officials. They were all ZIS cars and were the so-called luxury cars. [redacted]

34. [redacted] the following performance of the ZIS truck [redacted] It was simply built and it stood up very well in road difficulties. [redacted] It used more gasoline than did the GMC truck [redacted] but it was a larger truck. [redacted] as good as the GMC truck in every respect.

35. The most common means of transportation for private individuals in the Orsk area were horses, donkeys and camels that were mainly used as pack animals. However, there were many of these animals that were used to transport passengers in Orsk and Novo-Orsk. [redacted]

36. The repair of the trucks assigned to the transportation pools at the POW camps was all done in the garages maintained by the camps. [redacted] all repair and maintenance work was probably handled at facilities of some of the large companies or at Army installations. There was no private enterprise in Orsk.

37. [redacted]

38. All of the drivers of the trucks had to take an examination at the police station where a driver's license was issued. [redacted]

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39. All of the registrations for the trucks in the POW transportation pool were issued at the police station in Orsk. There is no difference in the series of numbers between the registration of a truck and a private automobile. There were no taxis in Orsk and no distinguishing registration on license plates of any kind.

40. The main traffic on the highway from Orsk to Chkalov and Kuibyshev was government people in automobiles and military vehicles. There was not very much truck traffic. 25X1
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the six trucks in the 25X1
transportation pool at Maksay was inadequate for normal needs and they could not spare a truck long enough for the longer trips. However, military trucks frequently traveled over the highway from Orsk to Kuibyshev although it was just as common to place these military trucks on freight cars and transport them by train. The average speed of trucks on the Orsk to Chkalov highway was about 40-45 mph.

Air Transportation

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41. There was no commercial airport in Orsk or Novo-Orsk but the director of one of the large chrome and nickel companies in Orsk owned his own company plane which was kept at a small airport about one mile outside of Novo-Orsk. 25X1
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42. The director of the chrome and nickel company was a very high official who made frequent trips to Moscow. The airplane he used was a Soviet plane with two engines. 25X1
no mail was ever shipped by air from Orsk.

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